



St. Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary School

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Friday 28th April 2023

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to all after what seems like a very long break. It is a shame that this week (due to staff INSET and strike action) feels a little disjointed but that also seems to have set the standard for the rest of the half term too, with a bank holiday and another strike day next week, and a second bank holiday on the third week too.

That said, it is still a busy half term with Year Six SATs tests that begin on Tuesday 9th May. It is essential that children attend each day – I've known children complete papers in hospital at the same time as their peers, such is the seriousness that the DfE places on the tests. As it is, our children are well-prepared and I am already very proud of them, regardless of the individual outcomes. Year Two will also complete their assessments at some point during this half term. We then have our dual residentials for Year Five and Six to end the half-term, with Mrs Bresnen capably holding the fort at school: some children will visit Boreatton in Shropshire and others experience life on the continent for a week.

Sandwiched in-between everything we have our May Procession on Friday 12th May, where we crown Mary, the mother of Jesus and of us all. We also have our special celebration for our children receiving First Holy Communion next weekend. Finally, the week after we have the PTA quiz on Saturday 13th May.

Golden Book

Reception: Freya Bucknall for being so brave on our class trip to the farm. Freya was an excellent role model to the other children as she overcame her fear of petting the animals throughout the day and encouraged her peers to do the same. Well done, Freya!

Year One: Tobias Ahmed has started this half-term well, with a positive and motivated attitude. He has contributed to some great discussions about how we use our new virtues and values - curious and active - in our everyday lives. He has also shown to be curious and active when learning about the Immigrant Creed. From this, he was able to share some great ideas as to how we can support refugees and asylum seekers and make them feel welcome. Fantastic work so far, Tobias, keep it up!

Year Two: Ethan Velasquez for always ensuring he does his best work no matter what the lesson. He has been participating and contributing thoughtful answers during lessons and is growing in confidence! Keep up the good work, Ethan.

Year Three: Emily Lin for working extremely hard this week. She showed amazing mathematical skills when working out money word problems and produced a fantastic piece of writing about The Road to Emmaus in RE. Keep up the hard work, Emily!

Year Four: Cian Nevin for his continuous dedication to his studies: he has particularly applied himself during our Maths topic on time, assisting other class members that have found the topic trickier. Cian's enthusiasm for learning is catching and his curiosity not inspires not only his peers but also the teachers leading

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the lessons. He is also a fantastic swimmer and has deservedly been rewarded for his feats in our 'Gifts from God' assembly this week.

Year Five: Patrisha Arulprasad for her wonderful contributions in class discussions. Patrisha is always willing to have a go at answering questions – even if she is unsure. She then uses this knowledge in her work and she has learnt from any mistakes she has made previously. Her determination and resilience with her work is evident and she has made outstanding progress this year. Well done, Patrisha!

Year Six: James McMahon for already demonstrating this half term's 'Values and Virtues' of being curious and active! James always asks thoughtful questions to further his learning and he always asks other people how they are feeling. He is proactive in doing things to make our school a better place to be and goes out of his way to make sure other people are happy. Brilliant to hear about our Head Boy!

King Charles III's Coronation

To celebrate this momentous occasion, the children are enjoying a craft day on Thursday 4th May, designing portraits of our new king.

On the Friday, children are invited to wear red, white or blue (the colours of the union flag) to mark the special extra bank holiday. On Friday also, we will be having a street party (of sorts) with children eating lunch in the playground with music and games. The sun, of course, will be shining!

You are also all warmly invited to the parish Party in the (car)Park on Sunday 7th May from midday, at St Ambrose Barlow Church. There's a tombola with bottles of Prime, should you need more encouragement...

Wednesday Word

Either by design or by happy coincidence, the Gospel this week informs our curriculum approach: that Jesus comes so that we may have life, and live it to the full. This is what underpins our education offer here at St Ambrose Barlow, whether that be in the opportunities offered to the children (sporting or otherwise), the way we treat all children with love and respect, or the content of the curriculum and the prism it is viewed through.

THE GOSPEL IN CHURCH **Sunday 30th April 2023**



Jesus said, "I tell you most solemnly, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold through the gate, but gets in some other way is a thief and a brigand. The one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the flock. When the shepherd has brought out his flock, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow because they know his voice. They never follow a stranger, but run away from him: they do not recognise the voice of strangers." The disciples failed to understand what Jesus meant. So Jesus spoke to them again: "I tell you most solemnly, I am the gate of the sheepfold. All others who have come are thieves and brigands; but the sheep took no notice of them. I am the gate. Anyone who enters through me will be safe: they will go freely in and out and be sure of finding pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. But I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full."

Adapted from John 10:1-10

Stories of Hope and Home – Staff INSET

*"Every migrant has a name,
a face, a story"*

Pope Francis

On Monday, the whole of the school staff – including the office staff and Mr Hawkins – went to the Columban Missionaries in Solihull and met with a group of asylum seekers (those seeking refugee status) and refugees (those who have legally been granted permission to stay in this country) to discuss their plight: why they left their own country, why they came to this one, how they feel and the challenges they have faced. It was an eye-opening experience,

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not to mention a moving and a challenging one. We ate together – an array of Sudanese, Nigerian, Cameroonian and Somali food – and then ended the day with a beautiful Mass.

'Lift the Ban' day of action

As a consequence of the above, we have invited some individuals from the same charity to come and speak to some of our children about their experiences, in an age-appropriate way. The children in upper Key Stage Two will have a workshop around the fact that that asylum seekers are not legally allowed to work. As humans, we can find dignity in work, and it would allow such people to feel part of a community, rather than the marginalised group they currently are. Furthermore, if asylum seekers were allowed to work, it would avoid the criticism that they are a drain on our economy. This is not a party-political point that I am making, but one born in the teachings of the Catholic church. Scripture tells us: "Love the stranger then, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Deuteronomy 10:19). Pope Francis reminds us that loving as Christ does means actively putting ourselves at the service of others and, actually, our response to migrants and refugees is rooted in the innate worth of each human person.

In school, children will be debating the issue and writing letters to their local MP, the Home Secretary and the Prime Minister. We live in a democracy and the educational value of this activity is learning that children have a choice and a right to express their opinion. Part of Catholic Social Teaching is trying to bring about the change necessary to build God's kingdom here on earth.

Immigrant Creed

Keeping in with the theme of loving our neighbour, the children had a prayer and

liturgy session this week based around Jose Luis Casal's Immigrant Creed, looking at how we are all created and loved by God and the Holy Spirit unites us all. God is our Father and we literally are brothers and sisters with everyone in the world. I have shared the prayer below in its entirety.

*I believe in Almighty God,
who guided the people in exile and in
exodus,
the God of Joseph in Egypt and Daniel in
Babylon,
the God of foreigners and immigrants.*

*I believe in Jesus Christ, a displaced
Galilean,
who was born away from his people and
his home, who fled
his country with his parents when his life
was in danger.
When he returned to his own country he
suffered under the oppression of Pontius
Pilate,
the servant of a foreign power. Jesus was
persecuted, beaten, tortured, and unjustly
condemned to death.
But on the third day Jesus rose from the
dead,
not as a scorned foreigner but to offer us
citizenship in God's kingdom.*

*I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the eternal immigrant from God's
kingdom among us,
who speaks all languages, lives in all
countries,
and reunites all races.*

*I believe that the Church is the secure
home
for foreigners and for all believers.
I believe that the communion of saints
begins
when we embrace all God's people in all
their diversity.
I believe in forgiveness, which makes us all
equal before God,*

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*and in reconciliation, which heals our
brokenness.*

*I believe that in the Resurrection
God will unite us as one people
in which all are distinct and all are alike at
the same time.*

*I believe in life eternal, in which no one
will be foreigner
but all will be citizens of the kingdom
where God reigns forever and ever.
Amen.*

First Holy Communion

My thanks to those parents who have volunteered to serve teas and coffees at this joint parish and school celebration. The children are well-prepared (thanks to our parish catechists and Mrs Bresnen) and this joyful celebration will take place next Saturday, at 10am and 11:30.

Chess

Unfortunately, it will not be financially viable to run the chess club this term. The numbers of children who signed up did not cover the cost of the teaching sessions, and school was running it at a loss. We were prepared to do this until Easter in an effort to see if more children would become interested but unfortunately, we have taken the difficult decision not to run it term. It will hopefully return in September 2023.

Strike action

School is closed on **Tuesday 2nd May**, due to strike action. This is the last of the current dates but more may be communicated in time. As you may have seen in the news, this action is being taken by members of the NEU, but the other three major unions (NASUWT, NAHT and ASCL) are also now balloting their members. . In light of our safeguarding duty, we may be contacting some families over the extended closed period to conduct welfare checks.

Finally, an opportunity to celebrate our families...

On Thursday 22nd June at 5pm, there will be a special Mass for the families of the children in Year 6. This year, St Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary school says farewell to many of the youngest children in families which have been a huge and integral part of the school community. We thought a great way to celebrate this was to start a new tradition of a family Mass. We will gather together in the prayer garden for a special celebration and unveil plaques which will have the family names on of those who are leaving our school family. More details will follow and then you can let us know if you will be attending: round up the whole family to join a special celebration of your contribution to St Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary School!

Birthdays this week...

Happy birthday to Lawson in Year One who was six on Tuesday, the day he returned to school after the long Easter break. What a treat! Happy birthday to Nancy in Reception who was five on Wednesday, and Alesha in Year Three was eight on Wednesday also. Happy birthday to Patricia in Year Five who will be ten tomorrow.

May dates for your diary

Mon 1st May: May Day Bank Holiday

Tues 2nd May: Closure due to Strike Action

Wed 3rd May: Stories of Hope and Home

Thurs 4th May: Year Three at Hall Green Library

Fri 5th May: Children to wear own clothes (red, white and blue)

Sat 6th May: First Holy Communion Masses 10am and 11:30am

Sun 7th May: Party in the (car)Park 12-3pm @ St Ambrose Barlow Church

Mon 8th May: School closed for King Charles III Coronation Bank Holiday

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Thurs 11th May: Year Four at Hall Green Library

Fri 12th May: May Procession in school

Sat 13th May: PTA Quiz at Parish hall

Mon 15th May: 'Lift the Ban' Day of Action

Thurs 18th May: Whole School Ascension Mass 9:30am

Thurs 18th May: Year Five and Six (children attending Paris) at Hall Green Library

Fri 19th May: Year Five Class Assembly

Mon 22nd May: Year Five/Six children departure for Paris or Boreatton Park

Thurs 25th May: Year Five and Six (children who attended Boreatton) at Hall Green Library

Fri 26th May: Children break up for half term

June dates for your diary

Mon 5th June: School re-opens for children

Thurs 8th June: Year Two at Hall Green Library

Sun 11th June: *Corpus Christi* Parish Procession

Thurs 15th June: Year Three at Hall Green Library

Fri 16th June: Reception Class Assembly

Thurs 22nd June: Year Four at Hall Green Library

Thurs 22nd June: 5pm celebration Mass for Year Six families

Sun 25th June: Year Three Going Forth Mass

Thurs 29th June: Year Five at Hall Green Library

Fri 30th June: Reception Class Mass 2:30pm

July dates for your diary

Tues 4th July: Year Six at Hall Green Library

Sat 8th July: Summer Fete

Mon 10th July: Sports Day. Children can return to school or be collected directly from the venue

Thurs 20th July: Year Six Leavers Assembly 9am

Fri 21st July: Leavers Mass 2pm in the school hall

Tues 25th July: Break up at 2:00pm

Have a restful weekend and we will see you all on Wednesday next week.



Mr Clinton